Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-17. (Canceled)

18. (New) An apparatus for facilitating internet-based electronic auctions in a multiple-seller entity environment wherein networked participant sellers direct electronic postings of items for auction at the apparatus by identifying a topical categorization of the item, the sales format for the item, and the sales format parameters for the item to provide a scalable topically arranged multiple-seller controlled environment at the apparatus to an open audience of potential internet bidders in which the multiple participant sellers are in effect in control of the initiation of an automated ascending bid auction process at the apparatus via participant sellers commands received by the apparatus, the apparatus automatically processing in response to the received participant seller commands a topical arrangement and a participant seller directed schedule for a plurality of multiple simultaneous multiple seller entity auctions, the apparatus comprising:

a computer system and a database, the database having a structure corresponding to a topical arrangement of categories and sub-categories for the topical arrangement of multiple auction instances by a plurality of participant seller entities;

a user interface application program for execution by the plurality of participant sellers entities, the user interface application program to be executed on a computer operated independently from the apparatus, wherein information about the database structure corresponding to a topical arrangement of categories and sub-categories maintained by the apparatus is provided to a data repository accessible by the user interface application program for use when the user interface application program is isolated from communication with apparatus to asynchronously generate data records that can be subsequently linked into the database structure maintained by the apparatus;

the provided user interface application program configured to generate in response to user inputs a data record for an item, the data record containing a constrained user input of a topical categorization of the item from the database structure corresponding to a topical arrangement of categories and sub-categories maintained by the apparatus while the user interface application is isolated from communication with the apparatus;

the user interface application program further providing a means for a user to determine a schedule for an automated auction instance for the item at the apparatus by posting the data record for an item to the apparatus in response to a user determined time at which to post the data record for the item at the apparatus, the apparatus responding by generating an auction instance for the item corresponding to the topical arrangement selected by the participant selling entity while the user interface program was not in communication with the apparatus the auction instance at the apparatus providing an automated ascending bid auction instance to an open audience of potential internet participant bidders.

19.   (New) A method for a computer application program operated by a remote participant seller to coordinate asynchronous generation and scheduling of automated ascending bid auction instances in a remote topically arranged internet-based auction system while the computer application program is isolated from communication with the internet-based auction system, the method performed by the computer application program in conjunction with the internet-based auction system, the method comprising:

retrieving information about the topographical structure of the remote internet based-auction system from a data repository accessible while the computer application program is isolated from communication with the internet based auction system;

providing a selection of topographical categories and sub-categories for a user to select from when inputting data to build a data record of a good that will be subsequently posted into the internet-based auction system, the selection of topographical categories and sub-categories based at least in part from the information about the topographical structure of the remote internet-based auction system retrieved from the accessible data repository to assure proper linkage into the data structure maintained by the remote internet-based auction system when the

computer application program subsequently communicates the data record of the good to create an auction instance for the good at the remote internet-based auction system;

providing one or more data input fields to receive from a participant seller a title for the good and a subjective textual description of the good from a participant seller;

generating a data header that contains a user identification code and an authorization password for a data record created for the good;

receiving scheduling information from a participant seller at the computer application program to (a) post the data record in the remote internet-based auction system to initiate an automated ascending bid auction instance at the remote internet-based computer system, (b) designate a time at which the computer application program will contact the remote internet-based auction system to post at least one data record to initiate an automated ascending bid auction instance for the at least one data record at the remote internet-based auction system, or (c) post the data record in the remote internet-based auction system designating the good as on-hold awaiting an automated ascending bid auction instance start date at the remote internet-based auction system.

20. (New) The method of claim 19 further comprising:

receiving input from the participant seller at the computer application program to designate whether the good may be viewed by an open audience of potential bidding participants in the internet-based auction system prior to the initiation of the automated ascending bid auction instance or whether the good may not be viewed by potential bidding participants in the internet-based auction system prior to the initiation of the automated ascending bid auction instance.

21. (New) The method of claim 19 further comprising:

receiving updates from the internet-based auction system about the structure of the topically arranged system maintained by the internet-based auction system and storing the updated structural information in a file accessible to the computer application program while the computer application program is not in communication with the internet-based auction system.

22.   (New) The method of claim 19, wherein the initiation of an automated ascending bid auction instance by the computer application program opens an ascending bid auction process to an open audience of a plurality of internet participants at the remote internet-based auction system, and wherein the internet-based auction system automatically closes the auction process to the internet participants based on a predetermined condition.

23.   (New) An independently operated apparatus for an independent participant seller to schedule and manage a sale of an item at one or more independently operated automated internet-based auction systems, the apparatus comprising:

a computer system executing a program that provides a user interface to the independent participant seller that is posting an item for sale at one or more internet-based auction systems, the computer system in conjunction with the executing program performing operations including:

providing a sales format selection mode comprising a selection between at least an ascending bid auction format and a fixed price format, the auction format providing at least a manual auction start mode or a scheduled start mode to start an item for auction at one or both of a selected start date and a start time when the item is subsequently posted into one or more independently operated automated internet-based auction systems;

providing one or more data fields (a) to accept a textual description and a digital image of the item for posting, and (b) to facilitate selection of at least one independently operated internet-based auction system to post a data record of the item for sale compiled at least in part from the data input by the independent participant seller;

composing a data record for transfer to the at least one selected independently operated internet-based auction system, the data record comprising:

i.   a data header having at least an identification code and authorization code that identify the independent participant seller to the internet-based auction system from the application executing on the independently operated apparatus, and

ii.   data that describes the item for sale, the format for the sale and an image for the item for sale;

transferring the data record to at least one internet-based auction system to provoke a response from the internet-based auction system to initiate an automated instance.

24.   (New) The apparatus of claim 23 wherein the at least one independently operated internet-based auction system determines whether the application executing on the independently operated auction management apparatus for scheduling and creating auction sales instances is an authorized independent participant seller entity by retrieving the identification code from the header of the data record generated and transferred to the at least one independently operated internet-based auction system.

25.   (New) The apparatus of claim 23 wherein the application executing on the independently operated apparatus is capable of receiving a data message from the at least one internet-based auction system that the application executing on the independently operated apparatus is not an authorized application or requires an update or both.

26.   (New) The apparatus of claim 23 wherein an apparatus application downloads a new application for scheduling and generating online auction sales instances at the at least one independently operated online sale facilitator system; and

the independently operated apparatus executes the downloaded application to provide an application for the independently operated apparatus to schedule and generate a data record for subsequent transfer to generate and schedule auction instances at a system remote from the participant seller's application.

27.   (New) An article comprising a computer application program, embodied in a tangible medium, for asynchronously generating data records for goods while isolated from communication with an internet-based auction system while coordinating generated data records at the remote computer application with the data structure maintained by the internet based auction system to assure that data records asynchronously generated by the remote computer application can properly link into the internet-based auction system when subsequently posted by

the remote computer application, the computer application program comprising instructions to cause a computer system to perform operations comprising:

provide a remote computer application program for execution on a computer that is operated by an entity that is independent from the internet based auction system, the remote computer application configured to perform operations comprising:

(a)   providing a graphical user interface to an entity that is independent from the internet-based auction system, the graphical user interface:

    i.   allowing the independent entity to select a digital image of a good from a storage unit;

    ii.   accept input from the independent entity to designate a title for the good;

    iii.   accept subjective information from the independent entity for a textual description of the good;

    iv.   retrieving data corresponding to a database structure at the internet-based auction system to provide a graphical user interface selection of a category and sub-category for the independently entity to select from a topical categorization maintained by the internet-based auction system while the remote application program is isolated from communication with the internet-based auction system;

    v.   accept a selection of a sales format for a good, at least one selection being an ascending bid auction format;

(b)   composing and storing a data record for a good at a storage device accessible by the remote user application program;

(c)   providing a command interface at the remote computer application for an entity operating independently from the internet-based auction system to retrieve a data record for a good that was generated asynchronously from the internet-based auction system to (1) post the data record of the good at the internet-based auction system to initiate an automated ascending bid auction instance for the good at the internet-based auction system to an audience of potential internet bidder participants or (2) designate a time at which the remote computer application program contacts the internet-based auction system to post the data record of the good to initiate an automated ascending bid auction instance for the good at the internet-based auction system to an audience of potential internet bidder participants.

28. (New) The computer application of claim 27 wherein the data retrieved that corresponds to the data structure maintained by the internet-based auction system for asynchronous composition of data records for goods that can be subsequently posted and properly linked to the data structure maintained by the internet based auction system is from a data file accessible by the remote computer application that is updated by the internet-based auction system to enforce a topical category selection at the remote computer application program to assure that asynchronously generated data records can properly link to the database structure maintained by the internet-based auction system and initiate an automated ascending bid auction instance at the internet-based auction system.

29. (New) The computer application of claim 27 further comprising providing a data header for the data record when communicating with the internet-based auction system, the data header providing:

(a) an identification data field;

(b) a user identification field

(c) a password identification field;

the internet-based auction system approving authorization and tracking usage of the remote computer application from information received in the data header.

30. (New) The computer application of claim 29 wherein the identification data field comprises a store identification.

31. (New) The computer application of claim 29 wherein the internet-based auction system provides a unique identification code to the remote computer application for each successfully initiated auction instance at the internet-based auction system.

32. (New) The computer application of claim 27 further comprising a digital image compression software module to compress the data of the digital image prior to communication of the digital image to the internet-based auction system.

33.   (New) The computer application of claim 27 further comprising a print shipping label routine to print a shipping label for a good once that good has obtained a winning bidder from at least one internet participant via the internet-based auction system.

34.   (New) The computer application of claim 27 further comprising:

generating a de-posting request that is linked to the unique tracking code for a successfully posted good, the internet-based auction system allowing the de-posting of a good, only after the good has been successfully posted on the internet-based auction system and before the data record for the good is (1) locked by the internet-based auction system or (2) the internet-based auction system has modified the data record for the good to indicate a different state than the data record posted by the remote computer application.